



Merry Christmas



~ “Your life becomes meaningful when someone else can learn from it.” ~
Poentje Castro

Aruba mourns the loss of popular TV Presenter



ORANJESTAD – Yesterday, December 23, 2010, Aruba lost a very important personality, John Anthony Castro (47) better known as Poentje.

According to the local authorities, he was a victim of foul play.

Poentje Castro is a household name here on Aruba and around the Caribbean.

He was the TV Host and Investigative Journalist of a well known and seen talk show on the Dutch Caribbean islands, Aruba, Bonaire,

Curacao and Sint Maarten for the past nine years. In the beginning, he was only presenting/ hosting and co-directing the show Un Dia Den Bida which translates to “One Day In Life” broadcasted only on the island of Aruba. After four years he left the producing company went on

his own. It was then that he decided to start the same show in Curacao, Bonaire and Sint Maarten. It became more successful than he thought, but after five years in January 2009, due to financial drop he was forced to stop the program in the three mentioned islands, but was able to keep Aruba for its popularity with viewers. In November 2010 his financial situation regained stability again and he renewed a one year and three months contract with the broadcasting company in Curacao.

Poentje’s Facebook wall has hundreds of posts from friends and fans where he himself recently posted “Your life becomes meaningful when someone else can learn from it.” ~ Poentje Castro.

Our sincere condolences to all of the family, friends and fans of our colleague Poentje ~ may he rest in peace. ☐



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Students enjoy Amazonia Hospitality



PALM BEACH – Students from Aruba's elite high school Colegio Arubano, spent a wonderful evening at Amazonia Churrascaria enjoying the food and the

company of their peers. The students decided to get together to celebrate the holidays dining Brazilian-style, on perfectly grilled meats and a rich salad bar. Amazonia Churrascaria

recently underwent a refresh in preparation for the high-season, and is perfectly ready to serve big and small groups over the upcoming winter months, boasting a brand new salad bar. □



Appetizer

- Fish Soup
- Onion Soup
- Conch Fritters
- Escargot
- Salad

Entrée

- **Fresh Catch of the Day** prepared by our local chef just the way you like it.
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- Chocolate or Banana Cake
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IDEFRE takes a break at Amazonia



PALM BEACH – Members of Aruba's sports authority, IDEFRE, were spotted dining at Amazonia Churrascaria this week. They had a great time relaxing and unwinding,

over fantastic food and drink. IDEFRE organized somewhere between 60 and 70 sport events this year, they report, from local to international races and athletic

meets, besides physical fitness programs in the island's elementary school and the latest Ciclovía, which is an event that temporarily shuts-down entire streets for the benefit of bike-riders and skateboarders, an initiative introduced by the current Minister of Sports. For the coming year, they explain, their work load will be even greater, and thus just before the holidays, a refreshing stop at Amazonia Churrascaria was called for, and which they greatly enjoyed! □



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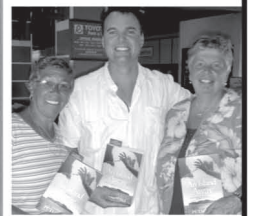
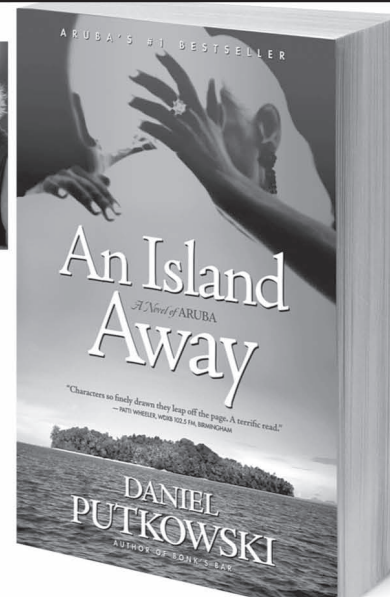
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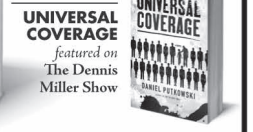
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COVERAGE
featured on
The Dennis
Miller Show

Reindeer on Aruba?

Unusual wildlife spotted in front of Papillon Restaurant



PALM BEACH - A pair of most unusual animals are the talk of the town these days. They can be spotted in front of Papillon Restaurant in The Village, across from the Radisson Resort. Two reindeer, clearly having lost their way, are frolicking the days and nights away, inviting guests to come and enjoy a terrific dinner - French-Caribbean style.

This is the second year that Papillon Restaurant is open for Christmas; the prison-themed, elegant place only opened its doors on January 1, 2009.

By now Papillon is a top restaurant, which perfectly combines casual chic with fine dining. The interior winks at Henri Charrière, the most famous convict in

the world, who escaped from Devil's Island in the mid 1940's.

As Christmas 2009 is almost upon us, it is high time to start thinking about making



reservations at Papillon, where guests may order à la carte or select one of the restaurant's special Christmas menus. These menus offer choices in appetizers and entrees. For instance one could choose the Lobster Bisque or Tuna Trio, the Angus Beef & Lobster, the Sea Bass or Surf and Turf. Following

European tradition, there is still game available, so that could be an option as well. Special wine arrangements are suggested by the excellent, knowledgeable staffers.

Papillon will be open on December 24, 25 and 26 as well as on December 31. Reservations are absolutely necessary. ☐



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Costa Linda's Engineers Give El Gaucho a Perfect Score



ORANJESTAD — The Engineering department of Costa Linda Beach Resort, the hard working men and women who devote their career to fixing and maintaining the Eagle Beach property, aiming at zero-defect ratings from hotel guests, gave El Gaucho Argentine Grill a perfect score for ambiance, food, service, live entertainment and in general a 100% satisfaction evaluation, as they enjoyed their Christmas dinner at the famed Wilhelminastraat restaurant serving the biggest and best steaks since 1977. □



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10% Discount on F&B

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At the Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino

George Nicholas Kruel honored by Government of Aruba



PALM BEACH - Recently at the Marriott Resort vacationers were presented with honorary titles created by the Ministry of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guest visiting Aruba for ten and 20 consecutive years. Special friends of Aruba, enjoying ten or more annual vacations here, are given the Distinguished Guest certificate and those with twenty consecutive years are awarded the Ambassador of Goodwill title. The recent honoring was effected by the Aruba Tourism Authority Associate Ricardo Croes at the Marriott Resort and Stellaris Casino, where they call their home away from

home. Mr. George Nicholas Kruel was honored as an Distinguished Visitor after coming to Aruba for more then 10 years. Mrs. Kruel coordinate a special private party at La Vista restaurant at the Marriott Resort and invited all her friends in Aruba. A fine cake was made specially for this occasion from the Marriott Resort staff. An old friend Mr Antonio Leo was also invited to the party. As a great surprise, Uncle Jimmy and Aunt Janet Cerasi, from Charlotte, North Carolina flew in to Aruba for the party. On picture ATA Rep. Ricardo Croes together with George & Carolyn Kruel and also Mr. Toppenberg staff and friends from the Marriott Resort. □



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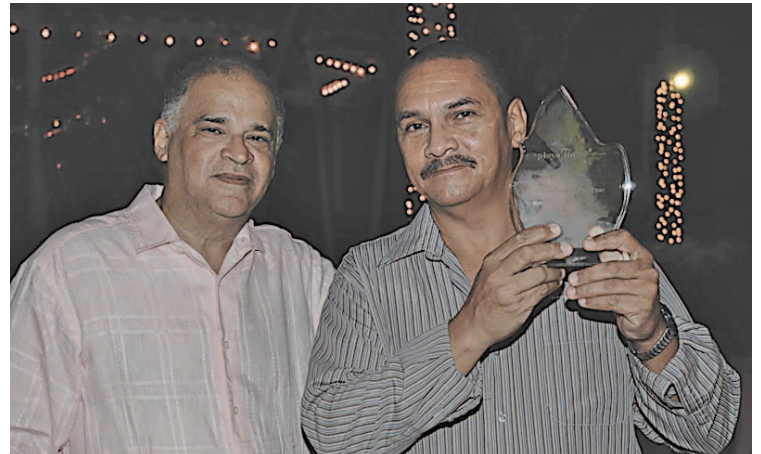
Playa Linda marks the holidays with a celebration of employees' accomplishments



PALM BEACH - The employees of the Playa Linda Beach Resort enjoyed a recent holiday celebration at the Aruba Surfside Marina, complete with dinner, dancing and the recognition of its most outstanding employees.

Playa Linda General Manager Jan van Nes congratulated the entire staff on its contributions to the success of the popular Palm Beach-based timeshare resort, especially in light of the additional challenges brought by renovation work. He provided additional praise to this year's standouts, which included: Employee of the Year Lucio Pieter, with the Front Office; Supervisor of the Year Hubert Martis, Beach Concierge, and Star Award winner, Armando Barroso. For their teamwork as well as excellence in job performance, the Accounting Department was named the "Department of the Year." Playa Linda Cooperative Association Board Member Jack Masser, together with his wife Pat, who was also present at the celebration, spoke on behalf of all the resort's timeshare owners and guests, expressing words of appreciation for the excellent work the staff accomplishes all year long.

The high spirits of the evening continued into the late night hours with dancing to a live band and toasts to continued camaraderie and accomplishments in 2011. □



Fishes & More showcases the best seafood entrees

Ask about the Early
Bird Menu from
4 PM to 6:30 PM



Fishes & More specialize in freshest fish and seafood on the island, and at the same time please the non-fish lovers as well. All the dishes are prepared a la minute by an internationally experienced kitchen team, which gives the twist to the fabulous dishes. Influences from all over

the world are found back on the menu and they are already well known for the daily changing specials. If you have a large party, or if there is anything you feel like in particular, Fishes & More can always arrange to have your dinner cooked just for you, as they work

only with fresh and honest products!

Ideally located in front of the Occidental Resort (Former Allegro), they are visited both by individuals and families alike, as they have a super kids menu, so they can enjoy their dinner as much as you

will yours!

Enjoy live entertainment every night at 8PM, and even after dinner the perfect night out continues, as you can shop till you drop since the shops on our friendly

square are open until eleven. See what its like to experience real fresh dining joy with a twist!

Open from 4 pm until midnight

**For reservations call
+(297) 586-3659**

Dinner is always a Genuine Spanish Experience

Casa Tua Barcelona hosts Live music on Fridays



ORANJESTAD - What a surprise!!! This old warehouse transformed into a typical Spanish or Italian town's square, with its gurgling fountain, French lamp-post and lime-washed walls features an open Pizza Atelier, under a small country hut, covered with old hand-made roof tiles.

Opened downtown Oranjestad

two years ago, the restaurant dishes reflect this inter-cultural relationship of Spanish, French and Italian cuisine, all served in a friendly, casual setting. On the menu, a wide variety of Spanish Tapas, appetizers starting at \$2.95, and plentiful Paellas, made daily, filled with mussels, clams, shrimp, pork loin and chicken. The menu also boats famous Pata

Negra ham, Chorizo, and other specialty dry-cured pork sausage.

Naturally, the restaurant's whole Grilled Red Snapper, fresh fish fillets and beef tenderloins are all cooked "A la Plancha," with just a sprinkle of olive oil, representing a healthy Mediterranean lifestyle. Patrons also favor the restaurant irresistible thin-crust pizza, baked according to a secret family recipe, topped with Casa Tua infused spicy olive oil, a signature condiment for Casa Tua restaurants on the Island. You really don't want to miss such an enchanting spectacular show.

From the dramatic Spanish instrumental ballads to the

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5:00 pm to 10:00 pm
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catchy warm Flamenco music of the Gypsy Kings, they deliver a night of fun and emotion....

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Aruba Bank invests in holiday cheer at Aqua Grill



PALM BEACH - A group of colleagues from Aruba Bank enjoyed a holiday celebration dinner at Aqua Grill this past weekend. The group is one of many local companies and

organizations opting for Aqua Grill this year, where a set of special banquet menus were tailored by Executive Chef Scott Scheuerman for holiday group events.



Guests at Aqua Grill have a diverse selection to choose from, including local catches and seafood flown in fresh daily, as well as non-seafood dishes including steaks and pasta.

Aqua Grill recently marked its eight-year anniversary in November, and has enjoyed a meteoric rise to the top of Aruba's culinary scene, setting the pace for an on-trend dining experience blended with warm and friendly island hospitality and a fresh-only seafood philosophy. □



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Menu Turistico
3 course dinner

\$19.95 p.p.

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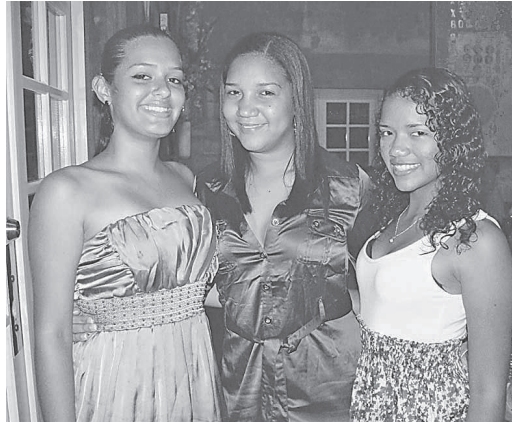
A unique outdoor dining experience in the tropical garden at the poolside terrace. Enjoy tasteful pastas, pizzas and seafood specialties prepared with the freshest ingredients.

Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa
Behind the Alhambra Casino

For reservations call: 582 3444
E-mail: giorgios@manchebo.com

Giorgio's
Ristorante Italiano

Volleyball Team gets into the Holiday Spirit



PALM BEACH – An all-girl volleyball team from Club La Fama, which has been in existence for over 65 years in Savaneta, was accompanied by former players and coaches as they made a trip to Palm Beach, to dine at Amazonia Churrascaria. It was a special

occasion as the girls ditched their volleyball uniforms in favor of elegant holiday attire, enjoying the famed cuisine of the famed Brazilian style steakhouse. Pictured here Club La Fama at Amazonia Churrascaria. □



J.H. YEE'S 珍味 Asian Bistro

Lunch Specials

SERVED FROM 12:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Soup
Egg Drop Soup
Entree

| | |
|--------------------------|----------|
| Vegetable Lo Mein | \$ 9.95 |
| Tahiti Pineapple Chicken | \$ 9.95 |
| Chicken with Broccoli | \$ 9.95 |
| Orange Chicken | \$ 9.95 |
| Mongolian Beef | \$ 12.95 |
| BBQ Roast Pork | \$ 12.95 |
| South Sea Supreme | \$ 14.95 |
| Crispy Orange Shrimp | \$ 14.95 |

All SELECTIONS SERVED WITH:
VEGETABLE SPRING ROLL, VEGETABLE FRIED RICE,
ICE CREAM

A 15% service charge and 1.5 % tax will be added to your check

Early Bird Specials

SERVED FROM 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Appetizer
Wonton Soup
or Lettuce Wrap
Entree



| | |
|--------------------------|----------|
| House Lo Mein | \$ 14.95 |
| Singapore Rice Noodles | \$ 15.95 |
| Tahiti Pineapple Chicken | \$ 16.95 |
| General Tao's Chicken | \$ 16.95 |
| Classic Pepper Steak | \$ 17.95 |
| Mongolian Sizzling Beef | \$ 18.95 |
| Bangkok Orange Shrimp | \$ 19.95 |
| Kung Po Shrimp | \$ 19.95 |

All SELECTIONS SERVED WITH:
STEAMED JASMINE RICE
ICE CREAM

A 15% service charge and 1.5 % tax will be added to your check

Located at South Beach Centre
Phone 586-3888

The Palm Beach Plaza looks back



PALM BEACH – Opened officially in December 2009, the Palm Beach Plaza has become a popular shopping and fun destination for locals and visitors over the past 12 months.

Indra Stamper, Tenant & Marketing Coordinator reflects on the year's activities with a great sense of satisfaction as the Palm Beach Plaza hosted a slew of successful events and contributed greatly to Aruba's cultural and social landscape. The Palm Beach Plaza's opened in December 2009, with a Christmas preview, with live entertainment and fireworks. Santa flew in from the North Pole, to inspect the gorgeous, champagne-serving Shivas Gold & Gems store, and to shop at Totto, Skechers shoes, Penha's fragrances, Mimo's ice cream, Tio Pepe's and Panache. While the 15.000 m2 of fine dining, shopping and entertainment was fully rented, some stores took a bit longer to complete their décor.

In February, the Aruba Post Office offered a VIP opening and cocktail reception for its new Palm Beach Plaza branch, attended by many movers and shakers in the community.

In March, Casa Tua Mediterranean, a stylish restaurant on the mall's second level threw a lavish, well-attended official opening party, with belly-dancers, bottomless cocktails and gourmet hors d'oeuvres. Totto, the leading Latin American brand, showed off its style and dynamism in March, when the opening party for the new boutique, took place.

Also that month the mall hosted Woman's Power attracting more than 500 of the island's professional females for an evening of fun under the stars, sponsored by Baileys Irish Cream via Romar Trading.

The Plaza Paranda delivered a night of artists, expositions and activities in March, presenting Belly Dancers, Face Painters, Caricaturists, Capoeira Fighters and Stilt Walkers, to shoppers' delight.



In June local musician Jossy Brokke celebrated his 50th anniversary as a local performing artist with an open-air concert on stage, in the heart of the mall, featuring local guest stars. The opening party of Sunspects drew a large crowd with fans and friends of the store trying out the new styles over cocktails and snacks.

In the summer vacation

months, Skate the Plaza and Rock the Plaza were designed to attract teenagers to the mall, skateboarding and listening to local bands with guest-musicians from Holland.

July brought the unforgettable FIFA World Cup Games to the Palm Beach Plaza which showed the matches on Aruba's largest screen in collaboration with ATV, channel 15 and Magic

on 2010 with great satisfaction

96.5FM. The opening of Hoshi Sushi & Bar, Japanese and Thai specialties, also took place in July, bringing the freshest Caribbean ingredients to a sushi-loving crowd.

In August, Happy Feet was shown on the giant screen providing a summer vacation activity for school kids and their families.

Also in August, the Senior League Baseball World Series 2010 champions visited the mall.

They were greeted by the Minister of Health Dr Richard Visser. While in the mall, the athletes were invited to DreamBowl for a few rounds of bowling. They enjoyed Lasertag at Fun City and savoured the hospitality of Aruba's only, just-opened Food Court, at Churromania, Scieue Scieue, Bon Chicken and Aladdin Shoarma Express. They also visited Panache, Candyland, Penha Perfumes, Birkenstock and Mimo's ice cream, to admire the displays and sample the goods.

In September a Beach Clean Up spearheaded by JADS Dive Center, on Baby Beach was supported by the Palm Beach Plaza in collaborations with Panache, Aruba Fun City, Candyland and Pixies. The SPLASH for TRASH project at Baby Beach helped clean up one of Aruba's most popular beaches, as a form of community service.

Also in September, Reggae singer Tarrus Riley visited the Palm Beach Plaza and stocked up on candy at Candyland.

That month the mall introduced the Palm Beach Plaza's Caribbean Review, which presented local folkloric music and dances, ending with an exhilarating segment of Carnival music. The show designed to entertain visitors walking the mall was received with great enthusiasm.

The Global Mala Yoga for Peace Project unfolded in September when the mall celebrated the United Nation's International Day of Peace in conjunction with Santosa Fitness, performing 108 Sun Salutations!

The Palm Beach Mall sent its

deepest condolences to family members and friends of local businessman Leopoldo Correa, who passed away unexpectedly in September, he was a visionary leader in his lifetime and the owner of three mall stores.

October rushed in with a number of fun happenings. The mall celebrated its first Halloween Spooktakular and its first Trick or Treat as kids traveled from store to store dressed in colorful costumes.

The Nurses Organization of Aruba (O.D.E.A.) and invited Caribbean members held the 27th Caribbean Nurses Organization (C.N.O.) at the mall with a special Suriname Night Event in recognition of that country, hosting the 2013 conference.

YOPLAIT's Press Conference in October introduced Save Lids to Save lives as the mall dressed in pink showing its support to Breast Cancer, victims and survivors.

A local promotion, BUKI BUM introduced two new Papiamento books to kids, accompanied by music, dancing and special games as kids had fun while learning.

In November the new cinemas opened. True to its promise to become Aruba's favorite entertainment center, the Palm Beach Plaza introduced its Megaplex 8 with a fabulous line up of great new movies, featuring superb viewing comfort and stylish design.

Also in November, the mall helped orchestrate a mass, public Zumba exercise happening in collaboration with the local Diabetic Foundation, staging an awareness campaign.

Touche Lingerie & Resortwear Fashion opened with great fanfare and a glittering fashion show set up in cooperation with Jewels in Paradise.

In December the Palm Beach Plaza bags were introduced to all arrivals at Reina Beatrix airport, along with a brand new Palm Beach Plaza brochure. And in order to improve access to the mall, a bus stop was added, making the Palm Beach Mall part of the general bus route!

All dressed up for the holidays, the mall hosted a number of successful Christmas shopping events including the Chevrolet Toys for Joy toy-drive in collaboration with Stern Motors.

The Palm Beach Plaza offers Shopping at 45 retail outlets, Dining at 9 restaurants,



a Beauty Spa, Cimenas, a Carwash, and 24/7 Security, Bowling, Kids Fun City, a special offers and discounts. Open from 10am to 10pm weekdays and on Sunday from 5pm to 10pm. □

WISHING YOU THE HAPPIEST OF HOLIDAYS!

The Airport Branch
will be closed on the
following dates:



Friday, December 24, 2010: Closed at 11:00 AM

Saturday, December 25, 2010: Closed

Sunday, December 26, 2010: Closed

Friday, December 31, 2010: Closed at 11:00 AM

Saturday, January 1, 2011: Closed

**Starting on January 2, 2011:
The Airport Branch will no
longer be open on Sundays.**

CMB

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www.cmbnv.com

PwC Celebrates the holidays at the Screaming Eagle



EAGLE BEACH – PwC, a firm which provides industry-focused assurance, tax and advisory services hosted an elegant holiday party at Screaming Eagle. The party was hosted by Senior Partner

Edsel Lopez and the firm's top management as well as Cees Rokx, Territory Senior Partner of PwC Netherlands Antilles and Aruba.

In his annual address to his team Lopez reviewed



2010 with a great sense of satisfaction. PwC introduced a new branding initiative this year, simplified the name of the company and continued to put even more emphasis on clients' needs. Lopez praised



his team's initiatives, investing in relationship, sharing and collaborating beyond their capabilities and experience, and creating added value against a backdrop of global economic challenges.

Lopez thanked the support staff, the partners and his team for their dedication and motivation in making 2010 a year of accomplishment and growth. He thanked God for his abundant divine guidance and wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

The culinary team of the Screaming Eagle restaurant prepared a gourmet 3 course meal paired with wines and cocktails, and NBO supplied the musical entertainment with après-lunch dancing. The party was organized by Shelby Maduro and Gregory Creeze, which shoulder the committee.

Netherlands Antilles and Aruba dates back 70 years and has developed into an organization of more than 160 people dedicated to clients out of our offices in Curacao, Aruba, St. Maarten and Bonaire.

PwC firms provide industry-focused assurance, tax and advisory services to enhance value for their clients. More than 163,000 people in 151 countries in firms across the PwC network share their thinking, experience and solutions to develop fresh perspectives and practical advice. □



About PwC
PricewaterhouseCoopers



Aruba Bankers Association

would like to wish all of Aruba

HAPPY HOLIDAYS AND A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR.

During the Year End Season the following member banks will close earlier on the following days:

Friday, December 24, 2010: 11:00 AM

Friday, December 31, 2010: 11:00 AM

Arubabank®
understands



CMB

CARIBBEAN MERCANTILE BANK N.V.



BANK

Amazonia Churrascaria adds joy to the world



PALM BEACH – The popular Palm Beach restaurant helped usher in the holiday spirit as it dined and wined a group from Imeldahof. Over the past few weeks, groups big and small have come to celebrate the holiday season at Amazonia Churrascaria, over delicious food and drink, served with great friendliness and attention to detail.

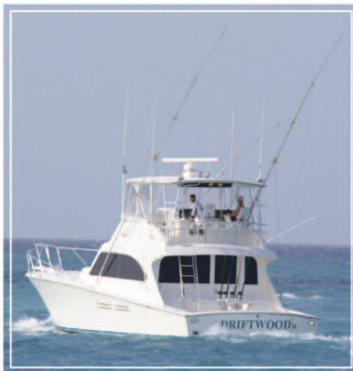
The restaurant recently underwent a refresh, and it now features a brand new salad bar, allowing patrons the freedom to pick and choose from over 40 tempting items, while making a full circle around the massive display. □



Catch your own dinner with Driftwood! Motto at Driftwood Restaurant: "From the pier to your plate!"

ORANJESTAD - The downtown marina is home of Driftwood Fishing Charters, the successful fishermen of the established seafood restaurant Driftwood in Oranjestad.

Driftwood owner Herby Merryweather has a love and passion for fishing. A fisherman who knows about fish, what our local waters have to offer, and what the words



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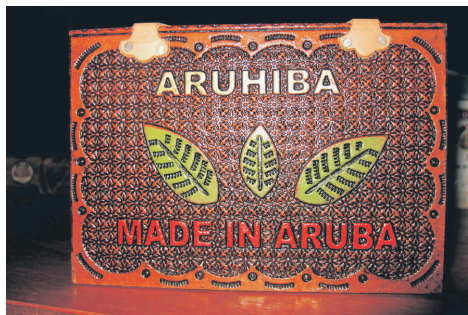
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On Top Of The News E-mail:news@arubatoday.com Website:www.arubatoday.com Tel:582-7800 Friday, December 24, 2010



Boise State quarterback Kellen Moore celebrates being named MVP of the Maaco Bowl NCAA college football game Wednesday Dec. 22, 2010, in Las Vegas. Boise State defeated Utah 26-3.

Associated Press

Martin powers Boise State past Utah in MAACO Bowl

By TIM DAHLBERG
AP Sports Writer

LAS VEGAS – It wasn't the bowl Boise State wanted to be in, and for the better part of the first half Wednesday night, the Broncos played as if they were thinking about the one that got away.

Then Doug Martin raced 84 yards up the middle, and suddenly the MAACO Bowl didn't look so bad after all.

Martin shook Boise State out of its brief postseason funk with his long touchdown run midway through the second quarter, and the 10th-ranked Broncos dominated the rest of the way to beat No. 20 Utah 26-3 in a game that wasn't as close as the final score indicated.

"It was a startup for our team," Martin said. "A momentum changer."

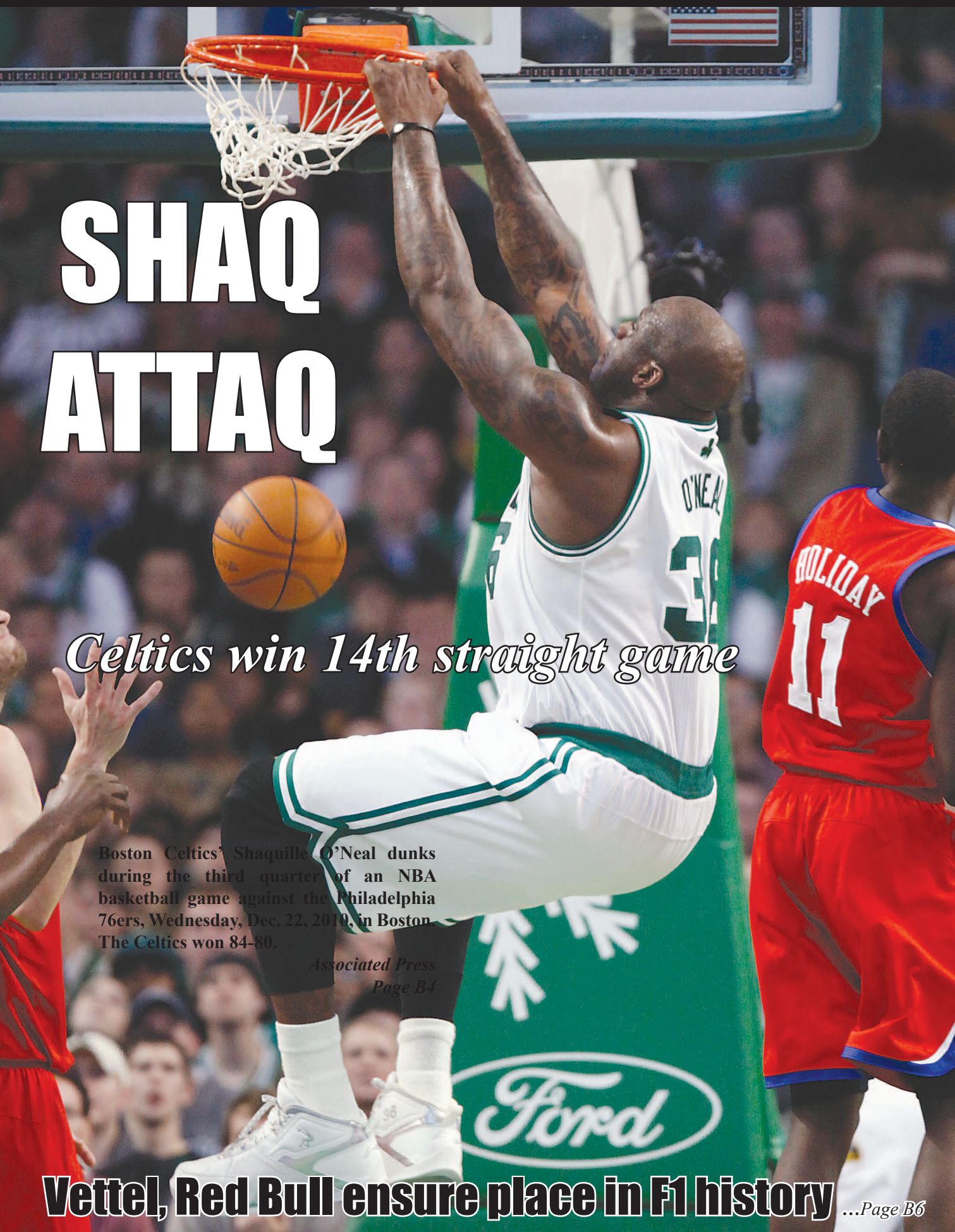
The victory was small consolation for Boise State, which missed out on a possible Rose Bowl appearance on two missed field goals last month at Nevada.

Continued on Page B6

Bah, humbug! Lakers' Jackson still opposes Christmas games

Los Angeles Lakers head coach Phil Jackson reacts to a call during the first quarter of an NBA basketball game against the Chicago Bulls in Chicago, Friday, Dec. 10, 2010.

Associated Press
Page B3



SHAQ ATTAQ

Celtics win 14th straight game

Boston Celtics' Shaquille O'Neal dunks during the third quarter of an NBA basketball game against the Philadelphia 76ers, Wednesday, Dec. 22, 2010, in Boston. The Celtics won 84-80.

Associated Press
Page B4

Vettel, Red Bull ensure place in F1 history ...Page B6

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Penn State head football coach Joe Paterno answers a question during the Outback Bowl NCAA college football media day on Friday, Dec. 10, 2010 in State College, Pa. Penn State will play Florida on New Year's Day in Tampa, Fla.

CLEARWATER, Fla. — Penn State coach Joe Paterno is looking at the Outback Bowl as a combination of this season's final game and the opener of the 2011 campaign.

The Nittany Lions continued their preparation

on Wednesday for the New Year's Day game against Florida with a practice session at the Philadelphia Phillies' spring training complex.

"We've got a very young team," a spry-looking Paterno said the day after

Paterno looking at Outback Bowl to jump start 2011

his 84th birthday. "We've got about 60 kids here that are freshmen and sophomores. Some of them are pretty good athletes that need some work. So I think in that sense, you're hoping that you can get some things developed that are going to carry over to next year. But no matter what, you've got to play a team like Florida, you ought to try and win." Florida's Urban Meyer will be coaching his last game with the Gators on Jan. 1. He announced his resignation earlier this month to spend more time

with his family and because of health concerns.

"It ought to be an interesting game because of that," Paterno said. "I hate to see Urban get out of it because he's been a good coach and he's been a good person. You hate to see college (football) lose guys like that. I feel fortunate that we're here and particularly playing against a team with the tradition of Florida."

Paterno, major college football's winningest coach is wrapping up his record 45th season on the sideline and shows no signs of stepping down anytime soon. He's also the all-time leader in bowl wins with 24. Paterno is under contract through the 2011 season. Both teams have 7-5 records.

"Florida's got a team with a lot of ability," Paterno said. "A little bit inconsistent, and that's about the same as we are. We've been a little bit inconsistent. At times we've looked like a decent football team. We've got to play our game and we've got to be ready for anything. I think it matches up as a really good football game. I think it's going to be a fun game to watch."

Later Wednesday, NCAA President Mark Emmert announced Paterno was the 2011 recipient of the organization's Gerald R. Ford Award, which lauds leading advocates of intercollegiate athletics.

"For me, coach Paterno is

the definitive role model of what it means to be a college coach," Emmert said in a statement. Paterno is scheduled to receive the award at the NCAA convention Jan. 13 in San Antonio.

While Paterno keeps looking ahead, it hasn't prevented some fans from speculating — yet again — about his future. The latest round of Internet rumors has Paterno calling it quits after the Outback Bowl, despite him saying last month that he hadn't given thought to not returning next year.

"None of this has any factual basis," Penn State vice president Bill Mahon, a spokesman for president Graham Spanier, said Wednesday in State College. "There have been no discussions whatsoever." Paterno had some birthday cake during the team dinner Tuesday after putting his players through a pair of practices. He plans to bring his whole extended family, which will include most of 17 his grandchildren, down for Christmas Eve.

"I hope Santa shows up, but not on Christmas Eve. I hope he shows up on January 1st," Paterno said with a smile. □

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Christmas games can be tough on those involved

By TIM REYNOLDS

AP Sports Writer

MIAMI — Phil Jackson and LeBron James agree: Christmas Day games are not the ideal holiday gift.

A day after the Lakers' coach reiterated his longtime stance against NBA games on Dec. 25, James and other members of the Miami Heat said they also wish they could be with their families on Christmas. Instead, the Lakers and Heat will spend the holiday together, playing in Los Angeles on Saturday afternoon.

"If you ask any player in the league, we'd rather be home with our families," James said. "I think the people that even set the games up would rather be home with their family during this day. It's not just a regular holiday. It's definitely one of those days that you wish you could wake up in the morning with the kids and open up presents."

James' two children will do their gift-unwrapping on Christmas Eve this year.

Jackson is the son of two Christian ministers, and he famously wrote a book on his spiritual growth related to basketball. The Lakers have been picked for a Christmas game annually since 1999.

"I don't think anybody should play on Christmas Day," Jackson said Tuesday night before the Lakers lost at home to Milwaukee. "I don't understand it."

Keeping with the theme

from recent years, the NBA went with five games again on Christmas. Chicago is at New York to open the quintupleheader, Boston plays next at Orlando, then after the Lakers host the Heat it'll be Denver at Oklahoma City and Portland at Golden State in the nightcap.

Christmas games are a tradition nearly as old as the league itself.

So, too, is complaining about them.

"I actually feel sorry for people who have nothing to do on Christmas Day other than watch an NBA game," Magic coach Stan Van Gundy said last year.

And those words drew the Magic what Van Gundy said Wednesday was a "hefty" fine a year ago. He even wondered if Jackson would be fined for what he said in Los Angeles the previous night.

So this year, he took caution when asked about playing on the holiday.

"I think you just have to accept it," Van Gundy said. "It's gone from the one game to the two games to the five games last year. It's part of the league. I had my say last year, I'm not going to have my say again. My owner paid for my comments last year, and he's not going to do that again."

Heat coach Erik Spoelstra says understands the arguments for and against playing on Christmas.

It's not a new notion for Miami,

which beat the Lakers on Christmas in three successive years after Shaquille O'Neal left Los Angeles for the Heat from 2004 through 2006. Miami also lost to Chicago in 1997 and Cleveland in 2007, while beating the Knicks in 2009.

"If you play with a team that doesn't matter, you never play on a holiday," Spoelstra said.

"When your team is viewed as a contending team, you normally play on the holidays and we view that as a good thing — because we've seen it on both sides. Certainly the times we haven't played on Christmas we've had good family time, but it also meant we probably didn't have a great team."

Jackson and James don't always have their opinions in concert.

Jackson, the 11-time NBA champion, said this summer after Miami signed James and Chris Bosh to play alongside Dwyane Wade that the "players obviously wanted to collude together and do this" — and use of the word "collude" raised some eyebrows in South Florida.

On this issue, though, the league's two-time reigning MVP and most decorated championship coach are in perfect harmony.

"The fans, we always say it's good for the fans," James said. "But the fans get an opportunity to see us all year. We've got TV games all year.



Los Angeles Lakers head coach Phil Jackson reacts to a call during the fourth quarter of an NBA basketball game against the Indiana Pacers in Indianapolis, Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2010. Los Angeles won 109-94.

Associated Press

We've got a TV game on Thursday (in Phoenix). I don't care for it too much."

Nor does Jackson, when he spoke out against the league's long-standing decision.

"It's like Christian holidays don't mean to them anything any more," Jackson said. "Just go out and play and entertain the TV. It's really weird, but it

is what it is. We have to go to work and make the best of it." Heat center Zydrunas Ilgauskas is a father of two as well, and he's been a teammate of James' for eight years — so he's well-versed in the Christmas scheduling issue. Diplomatically as always, Ilgauskas echoed James' thoughts. □





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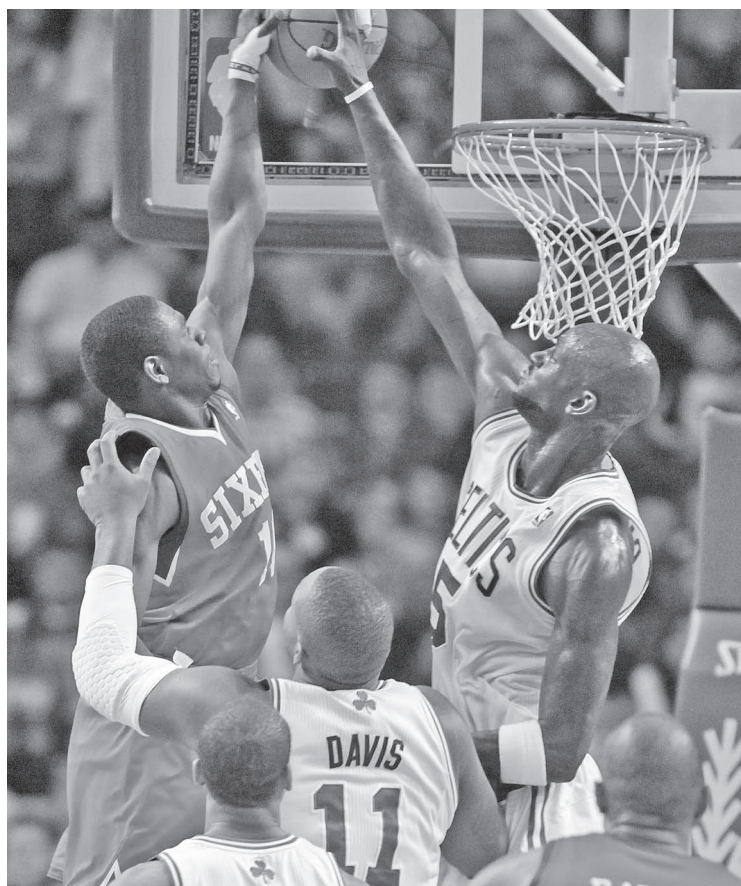
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Boston Celtics' Kevin Garnett, top right, blocks a shot by Philadelphia 76ers' Jrue Holiday, top left, in the first quarter of an NBA basketball game, Wednesday, Dec. 22, 2010, in Boston.

Associated Press

NBA Roundup

Celtics beat Sixers 84-80 for 14th straight win

JIMMY GOLEN

AP Sports Writer

BOSTON (AP) — Ray Allen scored 22 points and Paul Pierce recovered after missing his first seven shots to score 11 in the second half to lead the Boston Celtics to their 14th straight victory, 84-80 over the Philadelphia 76ers on Wednesday night.

Shaquille O'Neal had 13 points and nine rebounds, but he missed two free throws with 1:02 left and Boston holding a two-point lead. Philadelphia had two chances to equalize, but Andre Iguodala slipped and turned the ball over the first time and then had his shot blocked by Kevin Garnett the next.

Allen hit a pair of free throws with 5.6 seconds left to finish it off.

Elton Brand had 16 points and 12 rebounds, and Jrue Holiday scored 15 points for Philadelphia, which was coming off a 45-point loss to the Chicago Bulls — its worst in three years.

Spurs 109, Nuggets 103

At San Antonio, Manu Ginobili and Gary Neal scored 22 points apiece as San Antonio beat Denver — playing without All-Star Carmelo Anthony because of the death of his sister — for its 10th straight victory.

The Spurs improved their NBA-best record to 25 wins from 28 games. It ranks among the 11 best starts to a season in NBA history.

Ty Lawson and J.R. Smith led the Nuggets with 22 points apiece, and Kenyon Martin played 17 minutes in his season debut after missing the first 26 games while recovering from knee surgery.

The Nuggets said Anthony will return after Christmas. Their next game is Christmas Day at Oklahoma City.

At Minneapolis, Al Jefferson had 23 points, nine rebounds and seven blocks against his former team and Utah coach Jerry Sloan moved into sole possession of third place on the career victories list.

Jefferson scored 21 points in the second half and Deron Williams added 25 points, seven assists and seven rebounds for the Jazz, who came back from 12 points down at the start of the fourth quarter.

Sloan picked up victory No. 1,211, moving past Pat Riley into sole possession of third place on the career list. Only Don Nelson (1,335) and Lenny Wilkens (1,332) have more victories in NBA history.

Kevin Love had 25 points and 19 rebounds and Michael Beasley added 24 points and 10 rebounds for Minnesota. The Timberwolves have lost seven straight games.

Bulls 87, Wizards 80

At Washington, Carlos Boozer scored 30 points and Derrick Rose added 25 to help Chicago beat the Wizards for its ninth victory in 10 games.

Boozer also had 10 rebounds and a season-high seven assists to go with his second 30-point performance this season. The Bulls have won nine of 12 since Boozer returned after missing the first 15 games with a broken hand.

Luol Deng added 14 points for Chicago.

Nick Young scored 22 points for the Wizards.

Knicks 112, Thunder 98

At New York, Amare Stoudemire scored 23 points and Wilson Chandler added 21 as New York ran past Oklahoma City to end a three-game losing streak.

Rookie Landry Fields had 14 points and 10 rebounds for the Knicks.

In a game featuring the NBA's top two scorers, Stoudemire nearly matched league leader Kevin Durant, who finished with 26. But Stoudemire had far more help, with the Knicks putting six players in double figures. Raymond Felton added 12 points and 10 assists.

At Toronto, Richard Hamilton scored a season-high 35 points, Rodney Stuckey had 21 and Detroit beat Toronto to end a five-game losing streak against the Raptors.

The Pistons fell one point shy of matching a season high and ended an eight-game road skid, winning away from home for the first time since Nov. 14 at Sacramento.

Charlie Villanueva had 18 points and former Raptors star Tracy McGrady added a season-high 17 for the Pistons. Leandro Barbosa had 21 points for Toronto.

At Atlanta, Joe Johnson scored 23 points in his best game since his return from elbow surgery to lead Atlanta past Antawn Jamison and Cleveland.

In other NBA games it was Atlanta 98, Cleveland 84; Detroit 115, Toronto 93; Chicago 87, Washington 80; Boston 84, Philadelphia 80; New York 112, Oklahoma City 98; Utah 112, Minnesota 107; New Orleans 105, New Jersey 91; San Antonio 109, Denver 103; and Houston 97, L.A. Clippers 92. □

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NHL Roundup

Crosby extends streak in Penguins' 5-2 win

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Sidney Crosby matched the second-longest NHL scoring streak in 18 years with his first-period goal and the Pittsburgh Penguins beat the Florida Panthers 5-2 on Wednesday night.

Crosby scored for the 28th time in 22 games during the streak 7:44 in against the Panthers, giving the Penguins a lead they wouldn't relinquish when he fired a slap shot while skating down the left wing. Ben Lovejoy had his first career goal and Mark Letestu, Matt Cooke and Pascal Dupuis also scored for Pittsburgh, which has won 14 of 16, recovering from a two-game skid last week with consecutive convincing victories.

Stephen Weiss and Bryan McCabe scored for Florida, which had won five of seven. Crosby's streak matched Dany Heatley's in 2005 as the longest since the lockout that wiped out the 2004-05 season.

Mats Sundin of the Quebec Nordiques had points in 30 consecutive games during the 1992-93 season.

Red Wings 5, Canucks 4, OT At Detroit, Henrik Zetterberg's second goal of the game at 2:59 of overtime gave Detroit a win over Vancouver in a matchup of Western Conference division leaders. Zetterberg also had an assist on Nicklas Lidstrom's power-play goal that tied it at 4 late in the third period. Danny Cleary and Valtteri Filppula also scored for Detroit. Brian Rafalski had three assists and Jimmy Howard stopped 35 shots.

Henrik and Daniel Sedin each had a goal and an assist and Mikael Samuelsson and Jeff Tambellini also scored for Vancouver. Roberto Luongo made 40 saves.

Red Wings star center Pavel Datsyuk left late in the first period with a broken bone in his right wrist and is expected to miss at least four weeks.

tripping over Vancouver's Mikael Samuelsson and landing on his right hand. Samuelsson and Datsyuk used to be teammates with the Red Wings.

Blackhawks 4, Predators 1

At Chicago, Jack Skille scored two goals, rookie Corey Crawford made 24 saves and Chicago defeated Nashville for its third straight win.

Crawford made several tough stops but benefited from another tight, disciplined effort by defending Stanley Cup champion Chicago. He lost a bid for his first shutout this season with 8:47 left in the third period when Sergei Kostitsyn scored a power-play goal on a deflection.

Dave Bolland and Bryan Bickell also scored for the Blackhawks, who allowed just two Nashville power plays. Chicago has been short-handed only three times in its past three games.

Four of Skille's six goals this season have come against



Pittsburgh Penguins' Sidney Crosby celebrates after scoring a first-period goal past Florida Panthers goalie Tomas Vokoun, lower left, during an NHL hockey game in Pittsburgh on Wednesday, Dec. 22, 2010.

Associated Press

Nashville.

Islanders 2, Lightning 1, OT

At Uniondale, John Tavares scored 3:23 into overtime and New York snapped Tampa Bay's four-game winning streak.

Tavares got to a loose puck near the left post and swept a shot past goalie Dan Ellis to give the Islanders their first win of the season when they didn't score first.

P.A. Parenteau got the Islanders even at 1 in the

closing seconds of the second period and Dwayne Roloson made 34 saves to give New York points in three straight games (2-0-1). The Islanders are 3-17-4 in their past 24.

Ryan Malone staked the Lightning to a 1-0 lead in the first period.

In other NHL games it was N.Y. Islanders 2, Tampa Bay 1, OT; Pittsburgh 5, Florida 2; Detroit 5, Vancouver 4, OT; and Chicago 4, Nashville 1.

Hawks, Thrashers owners settle long legal fight

CHARLES ODUM

AP Sports Writer

ATLANTA (AP) — Michael Gearon and Bruce Levenson have emerged as the lead owners of the Atlanta Hawks and Atlanta Thrashers following a long legal battle and ownership split.

Gearon and Levenson confirmed Wednesday in an interview with The Associated Press they have purchased Boston-based Steve Belkin's 30-percent share of the NBA Hawks, NHL Thrashers and Philips Arena.

Gearon and Levenson, sitting together Wednesday night at the Hawks' game against Cleveland, wouldn't release financial details in which they emerged as managing partners of the ownership group.

"At the end of the day we had a business partner we were in a dispute with and we settled that matter," Levenson said.

The ownership split began in 2005 over Belkin's objection to the Hawks' trade of Boris Diaw, two first-round draft picks and a \$4.9 million trade exception to the Phoenix Suns for guard Joe Johnson.

"Now maybe we can move on," Johnson said. "I haven't paid a lot of attention to it, but it's kind of a relief."

Gearon and Levenson have consistently said the long dispute did not affect day-to-day operations of the teams.

Levenson, Ed Peskowitz and Todd Foreman are based in Washington, D.C.

Gearon is based in Atlanta, as are his father, Michael Gearon

Sr., Rutherford Seydel and Beau Turner. Turner's father is Ted Turner, the former owner of the teams. Levenson said he has had no success seeking additional investors for the Thrashers. He said he didn't know if the end of the lawsuit would make it easier to find investors who want to keep the Thrashers in Atlanta.

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| THE TOURIST daily: 4:15 - 6:30 - 8:45 matinee: 2:00 late show: 11:15 PG-13 | FASTER daily: 10:00 matinee: 12:15 late show: 12:15 R |

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Vettel, Red Bull ensure place in Formula One history

PAUL LOGOTHETIS

AP Auto Sports Writer

MADRID (AP) — Sebastian Vettel ensured Red Bull's place in Formula One history as the sport's youngest ever champion in a season that featured one of the most competitive grids in history and Michael Schumacher's disappointing return.

The 23-year-old Vettel won the last two races of the season to overtake two-time champion Fernando Alonso for the title in Abu Dhabi.

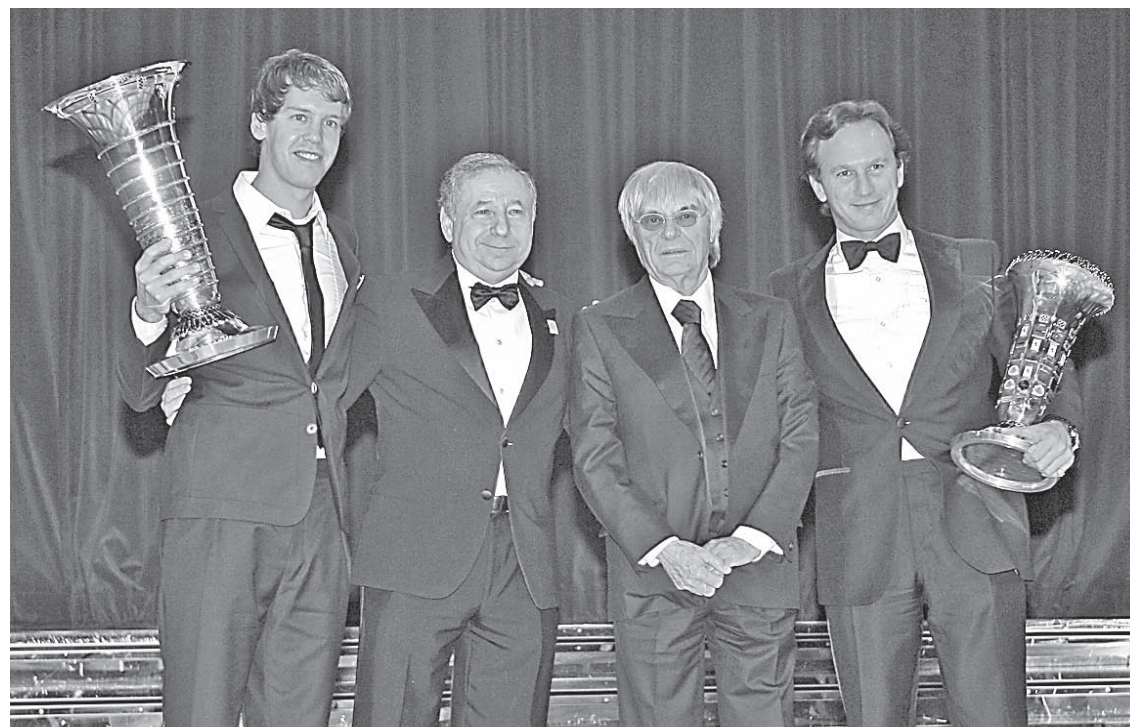
Seven-time champion Schumacher, meanwhile, returned with Mercedes after a three-year retirement at age 41 and finished 184 points behind Vettel in ninth.

Red Bull delivered a jolt to F1 as Vettel teammate Mark Webber finished third overall to ensure the constructors' championship for the energy-drink backed team.

After only six seasons in F1 and after nearly breaking through with the title the previous season, Red Bull expects more of the same in 2011.

"We expect a new car again but we don't take anything for granted," said Webber, who finished the last four races with a fractured shoulder to end 14 points behind.

The Australian has cleared the air with Vettel after a season when the two drivers clashed on the track, a year in which four champions raced in one of the most competitive seasons in history.



From left, 2010 Formula One World Champion Sebastian Vettel of Germany, FIA President Jean Todt, Britain's Bernie Ecclestone, president and CEO of Formula One Management and Formula One Administration, and Red Bull team manager Christian Horner of Britain pose together during the 2010 FIA Prize Giving gala in Monaco, Friday, Dec. 10, 2010.

Associated Press

With Vettel, there will now be five champions on the grid for the start of the 2011 season.

Red Bull said it will not alter its ban on team orders, although FIA has decided to allow them as long as they don't bring the sport into disrepute.

Ferrari president Luca di Montezemolo said Alonso and teammate Felipe Massa will start on equal footing.

"In a year when we did not have the best car, we managed to get to the last race still in with a great chance of winning the title after staging a really strong recovery," said Alonso, who went into the finale at Abu Dhabi with an eight-point lead but ended up four

MAACO BOWL

Continued from Page B1

But the dominating win against a team that was at one time ranked No. 6 in the country was a reminder why the Broncos rode high in the polls before suffering their only loss in two years.

It may also be a reminder for next year's poll voters not to write off a team that won every game over the last two years except the one that really mattered. The loss to Nevada not only cost the school millions of dollars in a BCS bowl bid, but some of the grudging respect others had finally given Boise State. Count Utah coach Kyle

Whittingham among the believers.

"This is a team that was the top ranked team that was setting itself up for a run at the national championship," Whittingham said. "If they beat Reno (Nevada) and if Auburn or Oregon stumble, they're in that game."

Neither of those things happened, of course, forcing Boise State to go begging for a decent bowl bid despite its gaudy record. The Broncos landed in this gambling city, where the bookies quickly established them as 17-point favorites to beat a Utah team that also had its BCS dream

point behind Vettel in second. "In a race like that last one, anything could happen."

Neither Lewis Hamilton nor Jenson Button managed to secure the championship for McLaren, but all teams expect the British team to be one of the title favorites despite the ban on F-ducts and adjustable rear wings, two technical advantages McLaren held over the field.

Button, who finished fifth behind Hamilton after winning his first title in 2009, expects the team to again push the boundaries of the new regulations, including the return of overtaking system KERS.

"They have so much experience in that area that I think we'll have an advantage," Button said. □

dashed late in the season.

But Boise State came out flat and seemed disinterested. Kellen Moore fumbled on the third play of the game and the Broncos turned the ball over three times to help Utah to a 3-0 lead.

Martin then scampered up the middle and headed down the left sideline on the first play from scrimmage following a Utes punt.

"It was huge," Moore said. "We hadn't been executing at a high level with our offense. Anytime you get a one play drive that results in a touchdown it's a huge momentum swing and it gets everyone going."

Martin's run came after a mistake-prone first quarter in which Boise State kept giving the ball away and making costly errors. Utah wasn't much better, and when the Broncos began finding their stride the game quickly turned one-sided.



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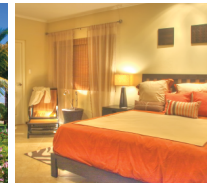
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The Blue Parrotfish Water Park reopens after a seasonal refresh



BALASHI -- The Blue Parrotfish Water Park on De Palm Private Island underwent a seasonal refresh during the past 6 weeks. A team of 16 local engineers under the guidance of a US water park consultant worked tirelessly around the clock to complete the check list and install an auto pilot

chlorination system which ensures the optimal condition of the water especially during high occupancy periods. At the end of the technical upgrade and improvement, the state-of-the-art Blue Parrotfish Water Park is now up and running again, as the switch was flicked back



on, Saturday, starting all adrenaline-pumping slides up. The park also received beautiful new designs on the decoration panels, by the same artist who painted the walls in the kids' corner. The Blue Parrotfish Water Park offers slides for every age: fast, medium and slow, and patrons may choose the level of speed and excitement from among six water-slides and family fun water features. Located on De Palm Island, just a short ferry trip away from the Port De Palm at Balashi, De Palm Island offers two beautiful pocket beaches

with lounge chairs and cabanas, welcoming the waters surrounding the island with sugar white sand. Adjacent to the beach, a special relaxing solarium, a paradise retreat to those in search of reading and introspection. The island offers its visitors free snorkel equipment, with easy access to the best snorkeling spot on Aruba teeming with beautiful live coral reefs and tropical fish. After a refreshing swim or snorkel session, the island delivers comfortable, guest-friendly facilities such as changing rooms and showers.

Your ticket to De Palm Private Island entitles you to all-inclusive food & beverage, entertainment activities, general facilities, as well as roundtrip ferry-boat service between Port De Palm on Aruba's mainland and De Palm Island. You can choose a half day or a full day option and purchase a package with or without boat/bus transportation. De Palm Island, a charming hideaway that features an abundance of water sports activities as well as restaurant and event space. □

A giant fundraising effort in Holland

The House of Glass is now a pre-Christmas charity tradition



At this time of the year, a recent tradition is keeping Holland in thrall: a nation-wide charity event called 'Het Glazen Huis' (the House of Glass). Inside a specially constructed building, mainly composed of glass walls, three DJ's spend six days trying to raise money for the charity

under sub-zero temperatures and snow blizzard conditions huge crowds gather to witness the 24/6 action and to donate funds. The three DJ's, Coen, Gerard and Giel spend the full six days inside the house taking just a nap on the sofa and drinking nothing more than fruit juices. Music and TV celebrities are stopping by to support the event

and to perform inside the house and thousands of people come by to support the DJ's and the good cause. The Dutch fundraising event is called Serious Request and any request, like asking for a song to be played, has to come with a donation, preferably a serious one, of course. The amount of money that the effort raises will reach several million



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Palm Beach

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Euros; more every year. The event is broadcast live on Dutch national radio and television; this Saturday, the tired DJ's will step out of their glass house and the final amount raised will be announced. Then it is time for Christmas celebrations! In Belgium, a House of Glass event is held simultaneously on the Groenplaats square in the city of Antwerp. Under the slogan 'Music for life', money is being raised to help AIDS orphans in Africa. Earlier this year, in October,

a similar charity event was held in Aruba, called 'Cas di Glas'. The first edition was a major success. Held in front of CILO City Lounge at the Renaissance Marketplace, the fundraising event was held for the Wilhelmina Cancer Fund, trying to get a mobile breast cancer screening unit to the island. DJ's Siomara, Jean Carlo and DJ 101 occupied a glass trailer for four days and a considerable amount of money was raised. The Cas di Glas 2011 is

already in the planning stage. In February a press conference will be held, announcing the status of the mobile unit that will be bought and further updates on the 2011 edition of the event and its chosen charity. For those who would like to see what the Dutch and Belgian versions of our Cas di Glas look like, please surf to www.stubru.be and <http://seriousrequest.3fm.nl/> and be amazed. Photos are of the first Cas di Glas event on Aruba. □

Last-minute holiday bargains:

Samsung Focus, Motorola Droid X

Santa's just a few days away, but there's still time to snag some enticing deals on some of the hottest smartphones of the year. One of the most enticing Android handsets of 2010 has also remained stubbornly expensive until recently, that is, with the 4.3-inch, Android 2.2-powered Motorola Droid X selling through third-party wireless reseller LetsTalk.com for \$19 with a new, two-year Verizon Wireless contract, or \$180 less than Verizon's current two-year contract price for the mammoth phone. Another top Android phone for the year Sprint's WiMax-capable, dual-camera

toting HTC Evo 4G has also been selling for a premium since its debut last summer, but LetsTalk competitor Amazon Wireless finally has an Evo 4G deal worth talking about: \$99 with a two-year Sprint contract, half-off Sprint's regular \$199 two-year contract price. Amazon also has a decent price on Sprint's second 4G WiMax phone, the Samsung Epic 4G slider: \$99, same as the Evo 4G, provided you sign up with Sprint for a couple of years. That's the good news, anyway; the bad news is that Amazon's listing the Epic 4G as back-ordered, for now. □

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or

Sea Bass and Antiboise
Wild bass fillet, citrus basil risotto and diver scallops

or

Ostrich Fillet and Peppered Fruits
Ostrich fillet, sweet potato mash and marinated red cabbage

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Spoon
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Amuse at Playa Linda is a Crowd-Pleaser



PALM BEACH -- The food at Amuse, just as its name implies, is indeed palate-pleasing, and most enjoyable.

It's a new concept for Aruba, says owner Chef Patrick van der Donk who together with his lovely wife Yvette opened the little French bistro at Playa Linda Beach Resort, serving contemporary favorites, in appetizer portions.

For the past eight year, Chef Patrick worked his magic in the kitchen of the Flying Fishbone Restaurant. He recently ventured out to manage his own bistro, in collaboration with Yvette, equally well-known from her days as the popular bartender at Le Soleil Cocktail Lounge, Tierra del Sol.

It was my dream for a long time, says Patrick, to exercise my passion for cooking at an Amuse Bistro, where patrons sample and nosh, dish after dish, as much or as little until satisfied, feasting on small, delectable specialties, perfectly plated and garnished, escorted by appropriate sides, and drizzled with nicely-matched sauces, accompanied by quality

wines, to be enjoyed at leisure, one at a time, or shared.

True to his vision, Amuse Bistro opened about two weeks ago and has been enthusiastically received.

Doubly-blessed Chef Patrick also met up with Sous Chef Urvin Croes, an Aruban-born chef classically trained in some of Europe's best restaurants who wanted to come back to his beloved island, to contribute to a new and interesting venture.

And thus, the island's first French bistro stars some real talent in the kitchen!

The friendly menu features a variety of truly made from scratch soups including a creamy Potato Pumpkin Soup and a hearty Seafood Chowder. During the daytime, Chef Patrick simmers large pots of beef, chicken and vegetable stock which he uses to make his signature sauces during the evening hours. It takes a bit longer, he says, but the rich flavor is very gratifying, and patrons immediately notice the difference.

A small smoker in the kitchen allows Chef Patrick to slowly

smoke veggies for his Chilled Smoked Vegetable Salad with herb vinaigrette and his outstanding Smoked Duck Breast with Truffle Dressing and Aged Balsamic served on a bed of green.

The restaurant's Peruvian Ceviche delivers the authentic coastal recipe, made daily with fresh fish marinated in lime, cilantro, red onion and milk. Other tempting cold appetizers include Snow Crab in a Melon Yogurt Sauce, and Sesame Tuna with Oriental Grapefruit dressing. Among warm appetizers, Amuse offers Truffle Linguini, Seafood Pasta, and a classic Deep Fried Calamari, lightly coated and crisp.

Chef Patrick's love of seafood is revealed as the menu offers most interesting Pan Fried Scallops in Orange Cardamom dressing, with Smoked Eggplant and Rucola, and the restaurant's own signature Shrimp Amuse, in spicy tomato and creamy herb sauce.

Because of the appetizer portion, beef lovers may order it all. Yes, you can have it all at Amuse, from Arabic Beef Kebabs with Tahini sauce, to Sirloin Brochette with Potato Gratin and Chimichurri sauce, and the Herb Crusted Pork Loin and the Grilled Marinated Skirt Steak.

Each dish will arrive at the table accompanied by its own sauces and its own sides, only in appetizer portion.

The desserts at Amuse are worthy of an article of their own, but meanwhile, we know you will still have space enough for Strawberry Romanoff, or



the heavenly Crème Brûlée with a Caramel cap. Chef Patrick's famous red wine ice cream escorts his favorite Brownie dessert which is really worth the calories.

And Yvette put together a nice Specialty Coffee menu

including an Aruban Coffee with Ponche Crema and a to-live-for Espresso Martini.

For a fun evening of tasting gourmet dishes at very reasonable prices, Amuse is a perfect choice. Outdoor, alfresco dining. □



BUSINESS

Aruba TODAY



VIOREL URMA

Associated Press

Braving high unemployment and unsustainable levels of debt and budget deficits in Europe and the US, the world economy is expected to slow in 2011 with economists cutting their forecasts for growth in developed countries.

On the upside, Asian economies will continue to spearhead the global economic recovery.

In a preview of its economic report for 2011 early in December, the United Nations said it expects the world economy to grow by 3.1 per cent in 2011 and 3.5 per cent in 2012. That's lower than the 2010 expected growth of 3.6 per cent - and far from enough to help recover jobs lost because of the economic crisis. The full report, including detailed regional outlooks, is expected out in January.

"The recovery of the world economy has started to lose momentum since the middle of 2010, and all indicators point at weaker global economic growth," the report said.

Among other things, it said

failure by countries to co-ordinate their monetary policies better was making global markets more volatile. "No, we are not out of the woods yet, and major risks are still looming," said Rob Vos, supervising author of the report World Economic Situation and Prospects 2011. "We expect the road to recovery to be long and bumpy."

According to the UN, the lack of employment growth is the "weakest link" of the economic recovery. Besides the lack of job creation, especially in advanced economies, volatility in currency markets is generating more economic uncertainty.

"The co-operative spirit among major economies is waning, which has debilitated the effectiveness of responses to the crisis. Unco-ordinated monetary responses ... have become a source of turbulence and uncertainty in financial markets.

The recovery may suffer further setbacks if some of the downside risks materialize, in which case a double-dip recession is looming for Europe, Japan and the United

World business year in review

States," the UN said in its release.

Among the downside risks cited were renewed declines in house prices in the US and tensions in foreign exchange markets that could prompt protectionist responses.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development projects the economies of its 33 member countries will grow a combined 2.8 per cent in 2010 after shrinking 3.4 per cent in 2009. It predicts growth in the OECD in 2011 of 2.3 per cent, lower than its June estimate of 2.8 per cent.

The Paris-based watchdog said there are still risks to the global recovery, including high government debt loads in several European countries. The OECD also warned that widening trade imbalances could be a problem, especially if countries start to pursue more protectionist measures. However, more robust growth in non-OECD countries will help shore up the recovery. China is predicted by the International Monetary Fund to grow on average by nearly 10 per cent in 2010 and in 2011. India (8.4 per cent growth in 2011), Russia (4.3 per cent) and Brazil (4.1 per cent) will also make solid contributions.

Global trade continues to rebound, the OECD said, rising by 12.3 per cent in 2010, before easing to 8.3 per cent in 2011 and 8.1 per cent in 2012. Trade growth will be especially robust in many Asian countries and Brazil.

Unemployment in the OECD area, however, would remain above 8 per cent in 2010 and in 2011 before slipping to 7.5 per cent in 2012.

The OECD repeated its call for European countries to enact labour market reforms to help contain the ranks for the long-term unemployed.

"Structural reforms are urgent in labour markets to increase employment, facilitate reallocation of jobs and workers and help ensure that the unemployed and vulnerable groups remain attached to the labour market," said Pier Carlo Padoan, chief economist of the OECD.

The economies of East Asia, including China, Japan, South Korea and Singapore, will grow 8.8 per cent in 2010, but growth will taper off in 2011 because of a weak global outlook and the phasing out of government stimulus programmes, according to the Asian Development Bank.

The Manila-based bank said in a recent report that growth in developing East Asian countries will ease to 7.3 per cent in 2011.

"With stimulus being withdrawn and the recovery intact, growth in 2011 should moderate as the post-recovery phase kicks in," the report said.

The region's growth faces several obstacles, the ADB said, including surging inflation in several countries. In the United States, Federal Reserve officials have become more pessimistic in their economic outlook through 2011 and have lowered their forecast for growth.

The US economy will grow only 2.4 per cent to 2.5 per cent in 2010, Fed officials said in an updated forecast in November. That's down sharply from a previous projection of 3 per cent to 3.5 per cent. In 2011 the economy will expand by 3 per cent to 3.6 per cent, the Fed said, also much lower than its June forecast.

The darker view helps explain why the Fed decided at its meeting last month to launch another round of stimulus. The central bank plans to buy US\$600 billion in Treasury

bonds over the next eight months in an effort to lower interest rates and spur more spending.

The Fed will examine what impact the programme is having on the economy. It has left the door open to scale back bond purchases if the economy were to strengthen in the months ahead. Or the Fed could buy more bonds if the economy were to weaken.

The Fed's forecasts of a slow economy with only gradual improvement in the job market are broadly similar to those by private economists. An Associated Press survey of 43 leading economists last month found that they expect the US economy to expand just 2.7 per cent in 2011, after growing just 2.6 per cent in 2010.

The central bank expects prices will remain in check. Inflation is projected to rise 1.1 per cent to 1.7 per cent in 2011, little changed from the previous forecast of 1.1 per cent to 1.6 per cent.

The National Association for Business Economics, presenting the consensus of forecasts made by a panel of 51 US economists, said persistently high unemployment and heavy debt burdens will hamper a more robust rebound. But the likelihood of either stagflation or relapse into recession was seen as low, according to the survey.

"Confidence in the expansion's durability is intact, but panellists remain concerned about high levels of federal debt, a continuing high level of unemployment, increased business regulation, and rising commodity prices," said Richard Wobbekind, president of NABE.

The biggest concern among the top economic forecasters was the federal deficit.

Continued on Page B12

BUSINESS REVIEW*Continued from Page B10*

They predicted it will shrink by only about US\$100 billion to US\$1.2 trillion - a level the NABE called "extreme."

Meanwhile, the number of jobs employers add to their payrolls is forecast to average less than 150,000 a month before picking up in the latter half of 2011. The unemployment rate is expected to remain elevated nearly 10 per cent through early 2011. It's expected to ease only slightly to 9.2 per cent by the end of 2011.

That would mark the weakest post-recession job recovery on record, the group said.

By 2012, when President Barack Obama faces the electorate again, unemployment will be 7.7 per cent to 8.2 per cent, up from the previous forecast of 7.1 per cent to 7.5 per cent, the Federal Reserve said.

The US economy is likely to get a boost from the recent agreement between Obama and congressional Republicans on taxes and unemployment benefits, business analysts say.

The agreement would extend the 2001 and 2003 tax cuts for two years and continue unemployment benefits through the end of 2011. It also would cut payroll taxes

and enable businesses to take more tax write-offs for investing in new equipment. If it becomes law, the deal could boost economic growth in 2011 to 4 per cent, according to Moody's Analytics.

In other economic predictions for 2011:

- In the eurozone, the European Commission revised upward its economic growth forecasts for the 16 countries that use the euro despite concerns over the debt crisis, but said it expects deficits in weak countries like Portugal and Spain to be higher than expected.

In its most recent forecast in late November, the Commission said eurozone economic growth in 2010 would likely be 1.7 per cent, nearly double its spring forecast of 0.9 per cent.

Growth is expected to moderate in 2011 to 1.5 per cent on the back of waning global growth and the impact of austerity measures being pursued across the eurozone. However, it is expected to pick up again in 2012 to 1.8 per cent as the private sector starts to take up the slack from the public sector's retrenchment.

The slowdown in 2011 will be most marked in Germany, Europe's biggest economy. Though growth is set to slow



from 2010's stunning 3.7 per cent, it will remain at an above-average 2.2 per cent, according to the Commission. France, Europe's second largest economy, is expected to grow by 1.6 per cent in 2010 and 2011.

The countries with the biggest debt difficulties will continue to underperform as their governments rein in spending and raise taxes.

Portugal -widely considered to be the next most vulnerable eurozone economy following Greece and Ireland - is expected to fall back into recession in 2011, shrinking by 1 per cent following 2010 growth of 1.3 per cent.

Greece, which was effectively saved from bankruptcy in May by an emergency euro110 billion package, is expected to shrink again in 2011 but by less than it has in 2010. The commission expects the Greek economy to shrink by 3 per cent in 2011, less than the 4.2 per cent contraction in 2010. Ireland, which was bailed out by its partners in Europe and the International Monetary Fund to the tune of euro67.5 billion, is expected to grow by a below-par 0.9 per cent in 2011 following the 0.2 per cent decline in 2010.

Olli Rehn, the commissioner in charge of economic and monetary affairs, said countries should be ready to enact further austerity measures even if growth comes in lower than expected. The Commission is forecasting budget deficits for Spain, Portugal and Ireland to be above the levels those countries have set out in their austerity programs.

Spain is a particular worry in the markets at the moment because its sheer size would make it extremely expensive for policymakers in Europe to muster the necessary bailout funds.

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- The Middle East and North Africa's economic growth remains strong, the International Monetary Fund said, while stressing that the region's reliance on oil revenues leaves it vulnerable should crude prices again collapse.

The agency in its semiannual World Economic Outlook estimated the region's growth to be 4.1 per cent in 2010 and 5.1 per cent in 2011, compared with just 2 per cent in 2009.

"The strength of the recent economic recovery in the MENA region is largely underpinned by the rebound in oil prices from their trough in 2009," the IMF said.

Mideast oil exporters, such as Opec kingpin Saudi Arabia, were largely able to weather the worst of the global meltdown by tapping oil revenues to spend on infrastructure development and social services. Other countries, such as Egypt and Lebanon, withstood the decline largely because their banking and financial sectors were not as exposed as those in the West to the crisis.

The rebound in oil prices played a key role in boosting the region's economies. Oil prices jumped above US\$90 a barrel for the first time in more than two years last week (Dec 7), a key milestone for analysts who

believe tightening supplies will eventually drive prices above the US\$100 mark in 2011.

Because of increased oil prices, the IMF estimated in October the Gulf states and other oil exporting countries in the region will see their combined current-account surplus rise to US\$150 billion in 2011, up from just US\$70 billion in 2009, giving them more leeway to spend.

However, economic growth outside the energy sector remains sluggish.

The IMF called on oil exporting nations to reduce their dependence on crude by diversifying their economies and to tackle lingering problems uncovered by the financial crisis, such as the immense debt load carried by Dubai state-linked firms.

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In Latin America and the Caribbean, strong exports and high commodity prices are fueling faster-than-expected economic growth. Next year growth is projected to remain relatively strong at around 4 per cent, though less robust than the GDP growth of 5.6 per cent estimated for 2010, the United Nations said in its 2011 economic report preview. Brazil, the engine of regional growth, continues with strong domestic demand to boost export growth of neighbouring countries. The region also benefits from strengthened economic ties with emerging economies in Asia.

The region's economy contracted 2 per cent in 2009. □



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Holiday shoppers sprint to end; retail revenue up

By MICHELLE CHAPMAN,
AP Retail Writer

NEW YORK — Holiday shoppers are racing to the end of the season at a more feverish pace this year, with retail revenue up 5.5 percent during the last weekend before Christmas.

The figure, released by ShopperTrak on Wednesday, is a drastic improvement from the same weekend last year, when revenue dropped 6.2 percent because a big East Coast snowstorm closed malls and kept shoppers at home.

This year's improvement is especially encouraging for retailers, for whom a big weekend all but sealed a shopping season of healthy revenue gains.

ShopperTrak reported shoppers spent \$18.83 billion Dec. 17-19. That includes \$7.58 billion spent on what retailers call "Super Saturday" — the Saturday before Christmas. The number of shoppers rose 3 percent over the weekend before Christmas last year.

ShopperTrak expects retail spending to rise 4 percent for the holiday season. It fell 0.4 percent during the 2009 season. Anything over 4 percent is considered a healthy gain.

The final days leading up to Christmas are important for retailers. Some do a third of their annual business during the season.

The final countdown to Christmas is especially important. ShopperTrak estimates that the 10 days before Christmas usually make up 31 percent to 34 percent of holiday-season retail revenue. □

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Holiday shoppers sprint to end; retail revenue up



By MICHELLE CHAPMAN,
AP Retail Writer

NEW YORK — Holiday shoppers are racing to the end of the season at a more feverish pace this year, with retail revenue up 5.5 percent during the last weekend before Christmas.

The figure, released by ShopperTrak on Wednesday, is a drastic improvement from the same weekend last year, when revenue dropped 6.2 percent because a big East Coast snowstorm closed malls and kept shoppers at home. This year's improvement is especially encouraging for retailers, for whom a big

weekend all but sealed a shopping season of healthy revenue gains.

ShopperTrak reported shoppers spent \$18.83 billion Dec. 17-19. That includes \$7.58 billion spent on what retailers call "Super Saturday" — the Saturday before Christmas. The number of shoppers rose 3 percent over the weekend before Christmas last year.

ShopperTrak expects retail spending to rise 4 percent for the holiday season. It fell 0.4 percent during the 2009 season. Anything over 4 percent is considered a healthy gain.

The final days leading up to Christmas are important for retailers. Some do a third of their annual business during the season. The final countdown to Christmas is especially important. ShopperTrak estimates that the 10 days before Christmas usually make up 31 percent to 34 percent of holiday-season retail revenue.

Consumers appeared to be in the mood to hit just one location for their shopping needs, with Thomson Reuters reporting that traffic at malls was higher on Super Saturday than a year ago.

But ShopperTrak anticipates this Thursday will likely edge out Super Saturday to become the second-biggest sales day this season behind Black Friday, as last-minute shoppers scramble to pick up gifts. Black Friday sales were \$10.69 billion, according to

ShopperTrak.

The Walking Co. store at Circle Centre Mall in downtown Indianapolis has seen a steady flow of customers.

"We're at least breaking even with where we were last year, if not better," manager Robert Stapleton said.

Recent data from MasterCard Advisors' SpendingPulse, which tracks spending across all transactions including cash, shows Americans were spending more on clothing, luxury goods and even furniture during the period from Oct. 31 through Saturday. Online spending has also been strong. As of Friday, shoppers have spent \$27.46 billion online since Nov. 1, up 12 percent from a year ago, according to research firm comScore Inc.

Improved spending is also a sign that the economy may be regaining its footing.

The Commerce Department reported earlier this month that November retail sales rose 0.8 percent, marking the fifth straight monthly gain. Department stores led the way with a 2.8 percent gain, the biggest for this category since a 3 percent increase in November 2008.

Retailers are expected to have a strong December, with Thomson Reuters predicting that revenue at stores open at least a year will be up 3.6 percent on average for the month. Discount stores like Target Corp. and BJ's Wholesale Club Inc. are expected to do well, along with teen clothing retailers like Abercrombie & Fitch Co. and Zumiez Inc.

This figure is a key gauge of a retailer's health because it measures results at existing stores instead of newly opened ones. □

Hundreds of Gaza Christians leave for Bethlehem

More than 500 members of the Gaza Strip's tiny Christian community left the blockaded territory on Thursday to participate in Christmas celebrations in Jesus' traditional birthplace of Bethlehem. The Israeli military coordinated the rare passage to the West Bank ahead of the holiday, saying it was part of its goal to ensure freedom of worship for all religions. About 3,500 Christians live in Gaza among 1.5 million Muslims. Relations have traditionally

been good, though there has been sporadic violence against Christians since the Islamic Hamas movement wrestled control of the strip three years ago. Residents leaving Gaza on Thursday played down any differences with Hamas, saying they were in solidarity as Palestinians in the struggle against Israel.

"Of course I am very happy that I will see my relatives and join them for Christmas. It happens only once a year," said Hatem Al-Far. "The only problem is they (the Israelis)

did not issue permits for all of my children." During the Hamas takeover, vandals ransacked a Roman Catholic convent and an adjacent school, breaking crosses and smashing the face of a ceramic Jesus. In the following months, unidentified assailants detonated a bomb outside a Christian school, firebombed a Christian bookshop and killed a Christian who worked at one. Hamas says it is committed to protecting the Christian minority, but no arrests have been made in any of the incidents. Christians currently comprise less than 2 percent of the population in the West Bank and Gaza, compared to about 15 percent in 1950. Like many other Christian communities across the Middle East, many have moved abroad to flee political tensions or in search of economic opportunities. Rev. David Neuhaus, the Roman Catholic vicar for the Hebrew-speaking Christian population in the Holy Land, said violence against Gaza Christians was largely the work of "Islamic fundamental vigilante justice," and not the Hamas regime. Nonetheless, he said Christian daily life was extremely difficult. □

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How to use that gift card wisely

It's traditional for many to cap a long season of Christmas shopping with more shopping once the holiday has passed. They spend gift cards and cash and exchange clothes that were the wrong size, wrong color or just plain wrong. However, people tend to treat gifts as "found money" and worry less about using the dollars wisely. But a little thought can make your after-Christmas dollars go a lot farther:

KNOW WHAT A DEAL IS: Don't blindly assume you're getting a good deal just because you're shopping on Dec. 26. Stores know people will be spending gift cards and are less likely to scrutinize prices.

You can find good discounts on items like coats, hats and snow shovels that get less likely to sell with each passing day, because stores know they have to unload them. But more evergreen items like video game systems are much

less likely to be on sale.

WHAT TO TARGET: You will probably find the best deals on clothing, says Dan de Grandpre, editor-in-chief of Dealnews.com, as clothing stores clear out what's left of their inventory and get ready for new merchandise.

However, retailers stocked up somewhat cautiously this year. You might find a great deal on, say, a coat, but it might not be the ideal color or style.

There were probably better toy deals before Christmas, during price wars among Target, Walmart, Toys R Us and other toy sellers, de Grandpre says. Also, the hottest toys like Monster High dolls were scarce even before Christmas. Don't expect to find them now.

You aren't likely to find great deals on most electronics, either, de Grandpre said. For most items, January will probably be better. Stores discount TVs then to draw buyers who want to upgrade

before the Super Bowl.

For gadgets like smart phones, price cuts are likely in January ahead of the annual Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, when manufacturers get shoppers excited about the next big thing.

One electronics category that might have good sales now is computers, says Morningstar analyst R.J. Hottovy. Computers "haven't seen the sales traction retailers were hoping for," he says. Don't look for markdowns, though, on tablet computers, such as Apple's iPad.

START SHOPPING ONLINE CHRISTMAS DAY: Most stores won't be open, but it's a different story online. On the Web, many retailers start post-Christmas sales a day early. Even if you don't buy, you can still do research what you want to buy Dec. 26.

It is more convenient, and "You can beat some people to the punch and find things that could be sold out by next day,"



says de Grandpre.

GET THERE EARLY: Many stores open earlier than usual. Target, Sears and J.C. Penney will all open at 7 a.m., for example. If you're shopping clearance sales, the earlier you get to the store, the more you'll have to choose from.

STOCK UP FOR NEXT YEAR: Some people are planners, and some aren't. But there's never a better time to save money on greeting cards, gift wrap and other holiday staples than after the holiday has just passed.

One warning: Don't do it

unless you have a safe, dry place to store the items. Rolls of gift wrap that get bent and bruised will just mean you'll throw it away and buy more.

SAVE THE CASH: If you got what some consider the sweetest present of all, remember this: You don't have to spend it. Not right away, anyway. And there are uses for it that could wind up making the gift bigger in the long run.

Paying down debt or investing the money can make the gift keep on giving long after the holiday is a dim memory. □

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